

THE  
**WORKING MAN'S ARGUMENTS**

IN FAVOUR OF

**THE CHARTER.**

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BY J. LEACH.

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"We are a numerous people, and we want strength! We have an excellent soil, and we are destitute of provision! We are active and laborious, and we live in indigence! We pay enormous tributes, and we are told that they are not sufficient! We are at peace without, and our persons and property are not safe within! What, then, is the secret enemy that devours us?"—*Ruins of Empires.*

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## INTRODUCTION.

"Whenever any crisis in the affairs of men is about to take place, there is ever to be found a number of people ready to preach up things as they are. These champions fight stoutly and cunningly against the innovation of existing institutions and modes of acting; and they endeavour to reason the sensible and alarm the timid into remaining quiet, and enduring weckly whatever evils they may be afflicted with. Belonging to one class, and having in view a common object, these alarmists attempt to convince the people that everything is almost as well as it can be—that few evils are endured by them which are not necessary consequences of existance—that their governmental burthens may be alleviated by gradual and imperceptible reform—that the present gradations of society, which cause so much discontentment among the poor and the oppressed, have always existed, and therefore ever must exist—and that any attempts of the productive classes to better themselves by interfering with this "natural arrangement of society," will be attended with the most disastrous results to themselves.

If it were ever possible to predict what shall be, from a consideration of what has been—if ever the signs of the times gave warning of great troubles or changes—there is that in the present which tells us in a manner not to be misunderstood, that the hour for the final conflict between Right and Might cannot be far distant. That it is time the event took place, let the wrongs of man for forty centuries testify—that it is time to put an end to the bondage of labour, let the sufferings of the millions of her martyred children bear witness!

Of all nations on the face of the earth, the people of the United Kingdom suffer the most severely, and are, therefore, the most in want of a remedy. Throughout the country, distrust or dissatisfaction is universal. Not one class or society is at rest; but a troubled and uneasy sensation—a kind of forerunner of evil or of change—pervades alike the bosoms of both the rich and the poor—the trampler and the trampled upon.

The productive classes are bewildered amidst the multiplicity of remedies offered for their consideration. They have as many remedies as wrongs—one contradicting another, and most of them equally useless; for they are alike based merely on passing events, instead of resting on the broad foundation of some great principle. That which appears to be a remedy in one year, turns out, in the next year, to be no remedy whatever; for the particular evil which such remedy applied to, is found to have shifted its locality, or changed to some secondary evil.

There is wanted, not a mere governmental or particular remedy, but a general remedy—one which will apply to all social wrongs and evils, great and small. The productive classes want a remedy for their incessant toil—they want a remedy for their poverty—they want a remedy for the misery, and ignorance, and vice, which such toil, such idleness, and such poverty produce."—*Bray's Labour's Wrongs, and Labour's Remedy.*

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## THE WORKING MAN'S ARGUMENTS IN FAVOUR OF THE CHARTER.

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### THE NATIONAL DEBT.

Since the year 1815, when the crowning earange of Waterloo, and the ceasing of the cannon's roar, with the dying groans of thousands of England's bravest sons, proclaimed to her at once her victory and her misfortune, men of

cool and thoughtful mien have, from time to time, published to the world their thoughts on that wicked, unchristian, and liberty-destroying war, whilst thousands—nay, millions of the people who, through ignorance, were led to believe that the achievement of British Arms and Money would secure to England a supremacy in perpetuity of the trade and commerce of the world, have found themselves miserably deceived; but, true to their former delusion, they have looked with anxiety for a return of those scenes of blood and devastation that has so long disgraced Europe, as the only means of restoring our former splendour and GLORY, as it was called, and stay our sinking power as a nation. (as if the true interests of England were to be based on blood and carnage.) How far this class of reasoners have been very properly deceived, will be seen from the fact, that within these few months—since the wars and disturbances commenced on the continent, our exports of manufactured goods have fallen off at the rate of fifteen millions a year, whilst the wages of labour are being everywhere reduced; and, in a corresponding ratio, National and Local Taxation is increasing.\* But what is this debt? For a nation to be indebted to itself sounds strange—England owes to England £764,608,284 5s. 1½d; and England for the privilege of owing England £764,608,284 5s. 1½d., pays to England the sum of £27,603,221 17s. 2½d. as interest, and which interest, takes ten shillings per week from one million sixty thousand seven hundred and twenty five persons!!

NAPOLKON said truly, when he characterised this National Debt as a ‘ cunningly devised fraud upon the people of this country.’ At the time it was contracted, the labouring people produced, by their industry, all the wealth of the state, as they do now in our own days—whilst our fathers, relatives and countrymen, fought and bled abroad—we sweated and toiled at home—thousands of them left their bones to bleach on a foreign land, others returned home with the loss of an arm or a leg, some blind, and all of them with broken constitutions. But this was not sacrifice enough; after all their blood and slaughter abroad, and our sweating and toiling at home, we are brought in debt, *seven hundred and sixty-four million six hundred and eight thousand two hundred and eighty-four pounds five shillings and one-penny farthing* for our pains, and which money we *duly owe* to those that never either fought or worked. Is it not passing strange, that those who do all the labour, should for ever be over head and ears in debt to those who do none? Truly, it is time that John Bull assumed the name of John Ass, for what other countrymen would bear with such ass-like patience the frauds and impositions practised upon him. But this is not the worst of this mis-called debt. Notwithstanding the vast amount that is annually taken from a people whose circumstances are sorrowfully realizing the ancient fable of Tantillus, to satisfy the participators in this huge swindle! So far from it getting less, is in consequence of the depreciation constantly going on in the value of labour increasing in its crushing weight on the shoulders of industry.

In the year 1801, the weaver received twenty shillings for the work he now receives *five shillings* for: the produce of his labour was, in 1801, sold at 1s. per yard, and now sells at 3d, so that the aristocrat get four times as much of the labourer's wealth for his money, and the labouring man three times less for the

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\* It is notorious that as poverty and oppression increases, so does the taxation of the country, as it becomes necessary to employ a greater number of military, police, &c., to stifle the complaints of the people, who will not tamely submit to the wrongs and robberies committed upon them.

performance of his industry. The combination of chymical and mechanical science, the genius of our artisans, and the increasing severity of their labour, through the driving ruinous competition of their employers, has equally depreciated in value, every other description of the labourer's produce, and of course has transferred the contents of the scantily supplied cupboard of the industrious producers, to the well-stored larders and wine cellars of the idle consumers.

This argument applies to all classes excepting those immediately above the working man, who now begin to feel rather remotely the privations that has so long been his lot; and who, if they could be brought to see their true interests, would at once perceive, that there is no other parties to supply the custom he is deprived of, through the oppressive privations the labouring people are made to endure.

The War estimates for the present year is £21,820,400, and takes 10s. per week from 839,624 of the people; the very existence of such a force, in time of peace, is the strongest evidence of the rottenness and oppressions of our present institutions. This, like all other departments, is infested with a large number of sinecurists, that is, parties who receive pay for doing nothing; whilst the working man cannot get sufficient pay for his hard labour. The sinecure colonelcies alone amount to £200,575, and takes 10s. per week from seven thousand six hundred and sixty-six of the people.

#### THE COST OF ROYALTY is £769,165,

takes 10s. 4<sup>p</sup> week from 29,591 of the people. Surely, it must be very gratifying to the loyal, lean, lank, starved, pauper-stricken men-skeletons of Britain, to know that 29,587 of them gives 10s. per week to the support of Royalty, its gew-gaws, and extravagances. What if their labour is hard and ill-paid, their wives in rags, their children crying for bread, and sometimes dying for want of it, what matter; it is all but of small importance compared with the glory and splendour of England—a glory and splendour that can only be displayed by the profligate and extravagant squandering of wealth raised by the sweating toilers! Verily, these aristocrats are pushing on the day of reckoning.—May it come soon.

[The expenses of the American Executive, including the President's salary, is about £20,000!]

*The following will afford a pretty correct estimate as to the difference betwixt the rich squanderers and the poor producers.*

#### Expense of Her Majesty's Household.

The Editor of the Broad Sheet called the "Mirror of Corruption" observes—This is certainly a rare bill of fare for one year; £2,050 for bread, showing a consumption of *sixty-one thousand five hundred quartern loaves*, at 8d. per quartern! £4,976 for butter, bacon, cheese, and eggs, showing a consumption of *thirty-nine thousand five hundred and twenty pounds of butter*, at 1s; *thirty thousand pounds of bacon*, at 8d;

#### Condition of the producers.

A Surveyer of highways in Ireland had removed 144 dead bodies that had been famished to death. In other instances, when only one of the family has been left, he has crawled to the door of the cabin and stopped it up with earth to prevent the dogs and pigs from devouring the dead bodies of their relatives, and then laid down and died by the side of of their putrifying bodies!! It is considered much under the mark to state

*twenty thousand pounds of cheese, at 1s; and two hundred and forty thousand eggs, at 1s. per dozen!!* Next we have £1,474 expended for milk and cream, showing a consumption of *twenty-nine thousand five hundred and sixty quarts*, at an average of 1s. per quart!! Then follows £9,472 for butcher's meat, which sum would purchase *one hundred oxen*, at £30 each; *seven hundred and fifty calves at £4, one thousand five hundred sheep, at 2l; and three hundred and fourteen lambs, at 1l 10s.!!* Think of that ye swallows of "green tails!" Next comes £3,633 for poultry, showing an annihilation of *forty-eight thousand nine hundred and forty fowls*, at 1s. 6d. each! Such a flock in the air, would obscure the light of the sun!! Next comes £1,979 for fish, showing a consumption of *thirty-nine thousand five hundred and eighty lbs.*, at 1s. per lb.! Larger than the miraculous draught. A little lower down we have £4,850 for wine, about *nineteen thousand four hundred bottles*, at 5s. each. (No teetotalism here!) And also £2,811 for beer and ale, showing a "jolly swill" of *five hundred and twenty hogsheads, and thirty gallons!*—enough to drown Pharaoh and his host!! Then comes £1,133 for *washing table linen!* by which it appears *two hundred and fifty thousand table cloths*, at 3d. each, must have passed through the hands of the washerwomen!—about enough linen to *envelope the whole world!!* Now is not all this a treat for the "swinish multitude?" No wonder we are *too thick upon the land!!* Contrast this with the other column.

Commerce! beneath whose poison-breathing shade

No solitary virtue dares to spring;  
But poverty and wealth with equal hand  
Scatter their withering curses; and unfold  
The doors of premature and violent death,  
To pining famine and full-fed disease,  
To all that share the lot of human life,  
Which poisoned, body and soul, scarce drags  
the chain,  
That lengthens as it goes and clanks behind.

that half a million have died of starvation in Ireland, during the last eighteen months. The state of England may be judged from the following, which may be relied upon as correct:—In London there are upwards of 50,000 people that rise every morning, without knowing where their first meal is to come from—that there are upwards of 40,000 prostitutes—that there are upwards of 15,000 houses for receiving stolen goods, from an old rusty nail to the richest jewellery—there are 14,000 under *fourteen years of age*, that live by theft and prostitution!—there are also a great number of houses kept as *decoy-dens*, to where young unsuspecting females are decoyed. These places are known to the middle and higher class rulers, but are tolerated that they may supply victims to the lusts and debaucheries of the aristocratic class.—Lords, both spiritual and temporal parsons, and members of parliament, have often been known to patronise these pests. In addition to this, there are thousands of honest labouring men, who, for want of employment, are perambulating the streets, in pining want and wretchedness, and this, too, in the richest city in the world! This gloomy picture has of late been made more gloomy still, by the ignorance and avarice of our legislators, in allowing the produce of foreign low-taxed labour to be brought into the English market, to put down and under sell the produce of the highly taxed labourer of England. Well might Shelley exclaim—

Commerce has set the mark of selfishness,  
The signet of its ill enslaving power,  
Upon a shining ore, and called it gold;  
Before whose image, bow the vulgar great,  
The vainly rich, the miserable proud,  
The mob of peasants, nobles, priests, and kings;  
And with blind feelings reverence the power  
That grinds them to the dust of misery.  
But, in the temple of their hireling hearts,  
Gold is a living god, and rules in scorn  
All earthly things but virtue."

## SALARIES AND EXPENSES OF THE EXECUTIVE GOVERNMENT

£1,787,735, and takes 10s. per week from ..	61,872	of the people.
Out of this department, Lord John Russell receives .. ..	£5,000	
per year, and takes 10s. per week from 230 of the people.		
Charles Wood, M. P. for Halifax, receives .. ..	£5,000	
per year, which sum takes 10s. per week from 192 of the people.		
Lord Palmerston .. ..	£5,000	
With under Secretary at .. ..	£2,000	
Earl Grey .. ..	£5,000	
With under Secretary at .. ..	£2,000	

There are various degrees of remunerations amongst these gentlemen, until we come to the worthy *mis*-representer of Manchester—Mr. Milner Gibson,—who has received £2,000 per annum, and which takes the entire wages of 308 of the factory children he has so industriously misrepresented, since their masters sent him to parliament.

In addition to these pickings, whilst in office, this patriotic order of legislators generally contrive to get themselves upon the "Pension List," altho' to a man, (no doubt from very disinterested and philanthropic motives,) they oppose that part of the "People's Charter," that provides for the Payment of Members.

## EXPENSES OF OUR "COURTS OF JUSTICE" AS THEY ARE CALLED

£1,640,602, and takes 10s. per week from .. ..	63,108	
Judges salaries £402,032 takes 10s. per week from .. ..	15,463	
Pensions, after receiving salaries from 3,000 <i>l</i> to 8,000 <i>l</i> per year, £74,744 17s. 11d. Total £2,116,778 17s. 11d. takes 10s. per week from 81,444		
of the people! This is not by any means the cost of this department of our civilized barbarism. In addition there is an innumerable spawn of the very worst description of the Vulture genus, from the highest cormorant in hermine, down to Jack Catch and the bumbailiff.		

## FOR THE SUPPORT OF OUR FOREIGN DIPLOMATISTS

£344,275, and takes 10s. per week from 13,615 of the people. These are a sort of spies of the higher class.—In that respectable vocation, they are the class that figure pretty general in the Pension List, the numbers of which receiving over one thousand a-year, amounts to .. .. £1,688,371 and takes 10s. per week from 64,975 of the people.

RURAL POLICE.—This is one of the late reform jobs, and cost the country, .. .. £196,635 or 10s. per week from 7,563 of the people.

COUNTY COURT Establishment.—This is another of their late reform jobs, and cost the country last year .. .. £265,435 The compensation given, by way of pensions, after the late Reform in the CHANCERY COURT, .. .. £76,000 Then there is a few pickings from the CROWN LANDS, amounting to £560,000 From the Droits of Admiralty .. .. £120,000

[These last items ought to go to lessen the taxes, but they afford only nick-nacks and sugar-plums for the sleek and well-fed paupers, who, in return, abuse and oppress the class whose labour affords them the "plunder."]

These last few items amount to £1,021,000 and takes 10s. per week from 39,370 of the people.

#### THE COST OF THE CHURCH £10,483,697

and takes ten shillings per week from 403,219 of the people.

This "Give us this day our daily bread" company, take care their prayer is heard, whatever become of the poor, for whom they profess to care so much. A great number of these gentlemen, in addition to the proofs they give their "flocks of their fleecing propensities," have of late assumed a good deal of the literary character, and stands prominently forth as the defenders of the most corrupt and oppressive institutions in Europe. The result of this system of vile oppression and plunder will be seen from the fact that, our Poors' Rate for the present year, will amount to £8,000,000 [formerly paid out of the Church property] which will take 10s. per week from 307,696 of the people.

How is it possible the labouring class can ever know peace or contentment whilst such a swarm of locust are continually preying on the vitals of their rights and liberties?

#### THE ARISTOCRATIC HOUSE OF COMMONS.

The following is a list of the rotten and corrupt House of Commons, that misrepresents the people, and supports this system of fraud and extravagance:

How it works is rendered clear enough by the complexion of the lower house of parliament, which contains about 250 persons immediately or remotely related to the Peers of this Realm! It contains 6 marquises, 7 earls, 21 viscounts, 34 lords, 25 right honourables, 47 honourables, 56 baronets, 9 knights, 3 lord-lieutenants, 74 deputy and vice-lieutenants, 53 magistrates, 63 placemen, 108 patrons of church livings;—and then there are the military pensioners in addition to these, for whom large and increasing standing armies are to be kept up in time of peace, namely—3 admirals, 3 lieutenant-generals, 3 major-generals, 22 colonels, 28 lieutenant-colonels, 16 majors, 43 captains in the army and navy, 21 lieutenants in the same, and 4 cornets! In short, these are scarcely 200 out of the 658 members, who have not either titles, office, place, pension, Church patronage, or immediate relatives deriving large sums annually from the established government abuses.

This "starch" and "backram" class affect to look down with contempt upon the working order, and censure their groveling propensities, when they talk of electing and paying their representatives to defend labour against their ignorance, avarice, frauds, and oppressions of these impudent usurpers, who consider any sort of crawling toadism and fawning sycophancy as no more than a compliance with the rules of civilised hypocrisy, provided their object is gained, and they get the first bite of the working man's "cherry!"

Working men,—Let not a moment be lost in organising yourselves in the great struggle of Right,—yours is the duty to defend the rights of labour,—until you do so, you never will, never must, and never can, possess those rights and liberties which nature and nature's God proclaims to be your own.

These Tracts are intended to meet the vile trashy falsehoods that are so plentifully teeming from the Press, in support of this "crying" system of oppression and fraud. They will appear from time to time, and be published at as cheap a rate as possible, so that they may have a wide circulation amongst the people.